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Symposium on Important Socialist Problems
By outstanding members of the S. P.

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Issues Facing The Cleveland Convention

Max Delson

IT will be the mission of the delegates at the Cleveland Convention to complete the work so admirably initiated at Detroit. The major operation performed at Detroit almost completely removed the cancerous growth of Old Guardism from the party.

The two years that have elapsed since Detroit might have been a period of great forward strides for the party if the Old Guard had accepted the democratic decisions of the convention and the membership referendum. Instead, these years have been freighted with internal strife. The Old Guard had paralyzed constructive socialist activity before Detroit. Since then it has labored to disrupt the movement. While the party languished for lack of funds to carry on routine work, the Old Guard spent thousands of dollars for its anti-party fight. Fortunately for the party, their relentless attacks have proved futile—in each skirmish, they have been decisively defeated.

We are now an the eve of the 1936 Convention. The Old Guard is marshalling its routed forces for its "final conflict". Its battle ground will be the convention under the slogan of "rule or ruin". It is determined to ride rough-shod over the wishes of the overwhelming majority of the membership of the party, and if they fail in this endeavor, to seek to split the convention.

Seating of the New York Delegation

Therefore, before the convention will be permitted to take up the grave issues facing the party, it will have to pass on a preliminary question of the utmost significance. It is the issue which symbolizes every other party problem—the issue of seating the New York delegation representing the loyal party members.

There is no doubt that the NEC decision will be sustained and the New York delegation headed by Norman Thomas seated. But it is desirable that the ruling be made by a large majority, for the decision on this question will be of historic importance to the working class in the United States. An endorsement of the NEC report will afford the convention the opportunity of proceeding with the constructive work of forging out of the Socialist Party an instrumentality dedicated to the achievement of socialism in our times. The progressive and wholesome accomplishments of the Detroit Convention will be carried still further along the road of socialist clarity and achievement. The rejection of the NEC report would be the greatest possible disaster for the party. It would lead the Socialist Party back again to the road away from socialism and towards opportunism and destruction. A campaign of expulsions would be undertaken which would result in the complete elimination from the ranks of the Socialist Party of all who stand for socialism. It would degenerate like the Old Guard in New York into nothing more than an instrument for bargaining with the La Guardias and Roosevelts. This convention must clear the deck of the Waldman clique and its brand of

"socialism" and then proceed to a consideration of the issues and problems facing the Socialist Party on the eve of the Presidential Campaign of 1936.

These problems come under the following headings:

1. Resolutions that will deal with such important questions as a Labor Party, the United Front, and War.
2. Organizational Report.
3. The Party Platform for the 1936 Campaign.
4. Election of the National Executive Committee.
5. Nominations for President.

No convention of the Socialist Party, particularly at this time, can ignore such significant questions as Labor Party, United Front, and War.*

Farmer Labor Party

The Socialist Party has always favored the formation of a Farmer-Labor Party. The party today has the allegiance of only a small section of the workers and working farmers. The first step towards the creation of a mass revolutionary party is to induce the masses to form a political party based on class lines. The Farmer-Labor Party is a necessary development because it achieves this end. It follows, therefore, that such a party can only be initiated if it has the support of large sections of workers' and farmers' organizations, especially of the trade unions. Since the conditions are not present today, it is futile to attempt to found such a party for the 1936 elections, and certainly not on a national scale. Premature efforts from communist sources have been essayed for a national Labor Party for 1936, which even they have now been forced to abandon. Such a movement would be abortive and would work real havoc upon the future development of the Labor Party.

On a local scale, in various parts of the country, there may be opportunities for the formation of local Labor Parties. The convention should clearly indicate that the Socialist Party state organizations or locals must not enter into such local Labor Parties unless they have very substantial trade union participation, or into any labor parties which support or endorse any capitalist party candidates. In each instance, the consent of the National Executive Committee must be secured prior to their affiliation. At all times, however, the socialist organization must be maintained intact and work in a Labor Party as an organized unit.

United Front

The failure of the Detroit Convention to adopt a resolution on the United Front has been responsible in part for the heated discussion which this subject has provoked in the movement. The whole question of the United Front has been deliberately confused by the Old Guard in its desperate attempt to pin a communist label on the party. The issue is, in fact, very simple. The United Front is a tactic which is designed to draw as many workers as possible into joint activity. Any procedure which limits the number of those participating defeats the very purpose of such tactic. Wherever the inclusion of communists in a given action will cause any considerable number of potential labor participants to refrain from joining, communists should not be included.

We do not, however, object to the participation of socialists in any activity because communists may also be participating therein, which is what the Old

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* Excellent resolutions on these 3 questions were approved by the Call Institutes recently held in New York, Chicago, Kentucky, etc.

Guard claims we should do. In fact, the party should seek to have the communists included in such activity on given specific issues, as a section of the labor movement, unless this will tend to disrupt the activity.

The sincerity of the objections raised by the Old Guardists particularly in New York can be judged by the fact that they have participated with communists in joint activity. For example, in the May Day demonstration of 1935 (which was arranged by the Old Guard in control of local New York, without first having secured the consent of the State Committee), Louis Waldman and Judge Jacob Panken marched in the same parade with the Communist Opposition Group and the Workers Party. After the parade, Lovestone and Cannon, the leaders respectively of these two groups, spoke from the same platform with Waldman. Even this year, at the Polo Grounds Demonstration in New York City, which was presided over by David Dubinsky of the I. L. G. W.U., Lovestone, representing the Communist Party Opposition, spoke from this platform at the Polo Grounds together with Louis Waldman, Herbert Morrison of the British Labor Party, and Harry Laidler representing the Socialist Party in New York.

The party should be opposed to a general United Front with the Communist Party at this time. First of all, there are fundamental differences between us on questions of tactics and theory, particularly on the war question. In the second place, they must still prove to us, and to the whole labor movement, that they have honestly favored the United Front and that they have abandoned their disastrous trade union policy. Present conditions are favorable for united action on specific issues, such as Labor Party, progressive trade unionism, unemployed, labor defense and the student movement, in which the Communist Party should be invited to participate. It is the responsibility of the Socialist Party, however, to lead and initiate such movements. In the election of 1936, the Socialist Party must run its own ticket and firmly reject the political United Front with the communists.

The convention, however, should permit the localities and states to enter into, and on important issues, to initiate the undertaking of specific joint action ventures along lines that might generally be laid down, particularly in those fields which have been enumerated above. In those localities where conditions are not ripe for the United Front on specific issues, the ultimate decision must rest with such local organizations. The convention would be retarding the movement if it forbade by decree the United Front on those specific issues which would exclude the Socialist Party from participating in some of the crucial questions of the day that required unity of action on the part of all working class organizations. The National Executive Committee should be given considerable discretion in these matters to permit it to modify the decision of the party, in the light of future circumstances and developments.

War

The Socialist Party still adheres to the position laid down by the St. Louis Declaration—it is opposed to all imperialist wars. The position of the Detroit Declaration of Principles on the question of war is in line with the St. Louis resolution. The party convention must adopt a position based on the fundamental conceptions incorporated in these two documents.

The ludicrous fiasco of the application of sanctions against Italy, the remilitarization of the Rhine by Hitler in violation of the Versailles treaty, and the Paris Peace Pact followed by the stalemate of the League of Nations and the earlier impotency of the League in connection with the aggression of Japan in Manchuria, have revealed the League of Nations as a League of Imperialist powers. It is understandable that capitalist governments should use such a device as the League to further their diplomatic duplicities. It is tragic that the Labor and Socialist International and its affiliated parties in Europe have been blinded by the false promises of the League. Only the workers and their class organizations can prevent war or utilize it to end the system which breeds war. These working class organizations must constantly keep alive the burning issue of war and struggle against any attempt to involve their countries in a "good" or "bad" war. On this question we take sharp issue both with the Labor and Socialist International and the Communist International.

Lack of space prohibits consideration of other important resolutions.

Party Organization

Due to Old Guard sabotage for the last two years, the party in certain sections of the country has suffered considerably. When we consider the lack of funds and the failure of the party to have more than one national organizer in the field, the National Office of the party has performed an almost miraculous task. A plan of organization must be devised and funds provided which will permit an expansion of the activities in the National Office in fields which we have barely touched. A labor secretariat must be organized on a full time basis which will seek out situations in the labor movement for fruitful socialist work, and will coordinate the activities of Socialist Party members in trade unions.

On a national scale, the party has for all practical purposes abandoned the cultural field to communist innocent groups. This deficiency must be corrected. A finance section of the National Office must be set up under the direction of a full time employee who will devote his time exclusively to a consideration of ways and means of raising funds. These suggestions merely touch the surface of the problem of organization.

Party Constitution

Closely tied up with the problem of organization is the question of the Party Constitution. If our party is to function effectively, the constitution must provide the framework for a centralized organization that can control and discipline its membership and its institutions. Unfortunately, there is considerable provincialism in the party. Some sections of the Socialist Party consider themselves as entities, separate and distinct from the national organization. They view the party as a loose confederation of state organizations. As long as this conception persists, the functioning of the National Organization will necessarily be impaired. At this convention steps must be taken in the direction of solving the problem of centralization.

The Committee on Constitution must consider the whole question of foreign language federations. The present setup is entirely unsatisfactory. Their prime function is to facilitate the admission of language groups into the party. In this respect, their efforts have been futile. Their next step is to aid in

the process of assimilating these elements in the party. Here, too, they have been unsuccessful. These deficiencies must be corrected and the entire structure of foreign language federations must be revamped to fit in with needs of the party. If they are to continue, even in a modified form, these language federations must be under the direct control and jurisdiction of the National Office of the party.

National Executive Committee

Between conventions, the NEC is charged with the responsibility of administering the affairs of the party. Some of the major considerations in the election of delegates to this all important body should be kept in mind. Does he accept the Marxist analysis as laid down in the draft program adopted by the Boundbrook Conference? Is he intimately familiar with the major problems affecting the Socialist and Labor movement? Is he prepared to devote much of his time to party work? The composition of the NEC will determine the road that the Socialist Party will take, both organizationally and idealogically.

Party Platform

With Roosevelt posing "as a great liberal" and with many progressives and trade unionists supporting him, it is of vital importance that our platform emphasize that only under a socialist society can the problems of the workers and farmers be solved. The platform must concern itself with the shortcomings and limitations of any reforms under capitalism. It should be a short and concise document which sounds a clarion call to the workers and farmers of America to unite under the socialist banner for their emancipation. The immediate issues in the platform must be few and must sharply portray our position on the question of the farmers and workers rights amendment, on relief, on war, etc.

The Presidential Ticket

No greater service can be done the movement than to choose as our standard bearer the one outstanding personality in America today who, year in and year out has stood steadfast to the socialist ideal, and has struggled unceasingly against capitalism, against reaction, war and fascism; the man who has played the leading role in every important labor and civil liberties struggle; the man whose name and courage and devotion to the socialist movement is known throughout America and who is feared by the enemies of the working class and respected and loved by the workers. Norman Thomas, who has given so unstintingly to the movement should be the unanimous choice of the Socialist Party convention to lead us in the 1936 campaign.

The party is on the march. In a world of fast moving and rapid changes, where the forces of socialism seem to be on the ascendancy again, particularly in Spain and in France, but where everywhere the war danger looms high, where fascism is determined to reshape the world in its own horrible image, where starvation, unemployment and poverty is the lot of untold millions, where the contradictions of capitalism stand forth in all their nakedness, the Socialist Party at this convention must create an organization that will be capable of fighting militantly against the menace of fascism, against the futility of Roosevelt, and for socialism.

Trade Union Policy for the Socialist Party

by Murray Gross

AMONG the important problems confronting the party at the Cleveland Convention, the question of socialist activities in the trade unions and the party policy toward such activities is probably most important.

Since the last convention many changes have taken place on the American labor scene. Two years ago conservative leaders in the trade union movement had their share of glory, thriving on the wonderful accomplishments of the Roosevelt regime and the institution of the NRA. Socialists at that time, correctly took the position that no panacea handed down by any government could solve labor's problems. Labor must organize its own strength and fight for its own benefits and rights. By now, the myth of the NRA has been thoroughly discredited. Those unions which were prepared and which took full advantage of the psychological moment, gained something for their members. On the other hand, those which depended on the strength of the government, found themselves completely disappointed; and yet, labor's "Pollyannas" are continually hopeful, continually gazing in the sky for some new miracle to occur.

Now again, instead of concentrating on the development and consolidation of a powerful labor movement, instead of educating and preparing the working masses to fight for their rights and existence, some sections of labor again are searching for new Messiahs. The tin gods have only changed their names. Labor has bowed in succession to the celebrated General Johnson, Grover Whalen, Robert Wagner, etc., and now, behold the snake dance staged by the recently organized "non-partisan" committee for the election of Roosevelt.

A few socialists, too, are to be seen with feeble hands carrying a flickering torch in the Roosevelt parade. The conclusion of these all-wise and all-practical labor leaders that Roosevelt is the man of the hour may be explained, but it can hardly be understood or excused.

If it is claimed that it is a progressive step for John L. Lewis to have shifted his support from Hoover to Roosevelt, can the same claim be made for those who have shifted from Thomas to Roosevelt. Nor can we take seriously the defense: "We are supporting Roosevelt, but not the Democratic Party." Regardless of whether they do or do not support the Democratic Party, in championing Roosevelt they are championing the outstanding representative and doctor of the capitalist system, and therefore are supporting the capitalist system itself. Socialism will only emerge stronger in losing "friends" who prefer "good" capitalism to socialism.

In the past, the Socialist Party spent many hours at National Conventions debating trade union resolutions. The chief objective that these resolutions served was to avoid taking a position. The cry of neutrality and non-interference in internal matters of the trade unions was put forward emphatically, but the con-

duct and activity by socialists within unions was left out of consideration altogether. Our effectiveness as a "harmless" party is quite obvious. We have leaders without followers in the unions. We find that we have positions without influence and without a program, and that we are brushed aside by the first wind of the liberal or demagogue.

In this convention, the party should orientate itself towards mass activity within the unions, if it wants to be effective in the life of the trade union and other mass organizations. Unless it does that, it has no basis for existence.

The party must begin to direct its followers and its members along progressive militant socialist lines. It must exercise discipline over the conduct of its members. It is as inconceivable for a labor political movement to practice and preach neutrality on any issue that faces labor, as it would be for the party to decide to be neutral in politics, and that all that we need do is educate the masses for theoretical socialism.

This does not mean that the party desires mechanically to control the policies and activities of the trade union movement. This does not mean that we are to subordinate the interests of the American labor movement to the interests of the Socialist Party; but it definitely does mean that just as each trade union has the right to decide the policy for itself and its members, so the party has the right to decide the conduct of its members along the lines of its policy. This policy should be one of leadership, and of the guidance of the American working class along the lines of unification of all the progressive elements for a class-conscious program.

We must take an active lead in the day to day struggles that the union man faces in his contact with his employers in shop and factory. A minimum program including the following items must be adopted at this convention.

1. Every socialist in every mass organization must be activized and be made responsible to a central directing source.

2. Socialists within any given unit in any mass or trade organization must meet and jointly decide the best course of tactics along the line of policy laid down by the party.

3. Socialists should not, and must not, construe this to be a sectarian course. On the contrary, through gains by uniting socialists for a socialist program, through the activity of the socialists, we must expand and influence unattached liberal and open-minded progressive workers.

We must weld together a progressive force within the American labor movement, a progressive force which shall rally around a program that shall include in its planks democracy within the unions, and aggressive policy against employers, the formation of a labor party, industrial unionism, etc.

We should set up at this coming National Convention, a labor bureau or a labor relations committee which will have as its objective the guidance and mobilization of our forces in the American labor movement, maintain contact with other progressive forces, and influence the trade union movement toward a more progressive orientation.

We must organize our activities in the unions so that our decisions, resolutions and policies may find an immediate response in all mass organizations. The question of the formation of a labor party should find our rank and file membership in the unions campaigning for a definite resolution, committing their

union to the formation of a labor party on a correct basis and at the proper time.

Our leaders in these unions can work to form a committee to sponsor the movement for a genuine labor party. Here again it must be emphasized that this should not be mechanical nor superficial as in the case of the communists; nevertheless it must be directed and initiated by the party.

On the question of industrial unionism, socialists are found on both sides of this issue. Within the Socialist Party there is no room for a division of opinion on so important an issue. We should make a definite and firm decision on this question. Moreover, we should take an active part in the work of the Committee on Industrial Organization, carefully avoiding any blanket endorsement of the CIO, because the CIO under its present leadership may continue to do good work and we hope it does; but, on the other hand it may not, and socialists must be on guard.

We are not prepared to follow blindly the activities of Lewis, Hillman, Dubinsky, etc. Certainly we are not going to partake in their political adventures. To the extent that their campaign is for industrial unionism, to the extent that they intend to organize the thousands of unorganized whose only salvation lies in the organization of industrial unions, to that extent we must be with them shoulder to shoulder, and perhaps by so doing we may influence the committees' work sufficiently to avoid any mistakes which might prove fatal.

In conclusion it must be pointed out that there are still hundreds, probably thousands, of socialists who are not members of trade unions, and that other hundreds or thousands who are members are inactive. There are important cities where trade union work is non-existent, where the trade unions are not aware of the existence of a socialist movement. The convention must finally put an end to this condition. Every party member a trade unionist! Every socialist active in his trade unon! These slogans must be enforced by the National Organization, the states and locals. The locals and states must further establish the closest working relations with the respective trade union movements, not by kowtowing to the leaders, but by help and cooperation in all their struggles and activities. In this way socialism will become a force in the American trade union movement.

ARTICLES TO COME

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Socialists and the Unemployed

by David Lasser

THERE are three schools of thought among socialists in viewing work among the unemployed. At the extreme right is the group which looks at the unemployed with sympathy and pity, but concludes that we as socialists can do nothing for them. This point of view was well expressed by one leading ex-socialist who declared, "Yes, the unemployed are to be helped in some way, but really I don't know what we can do for them." This attitude comes from those who look with superiority upon the unemployed as a group of poor unfortunates, associated in some way with perpetual breadlines and flop houses, with Salvation Army handouts, and "mister can you spare a dime."

At the extreme left stands the group which considers the unemployed as a handy tool for socialist domination, and wants to organize them as a willing and subservient adjunct to socialist party organization. Borrowing from the former tactics of the communists, this "left" group is impatient with the reluctance of the unemployed to swallow a full dose of straight socialist party doctrine, and says impatiently, "well if they can't take their socialism straight, they're of no use to us." DeLeonism is strong, although perhaps unconsciously, in the minds of this group. Like the right group, this left wing soon decides that the unemployed are hopeless and not worth bothering with.

Between these extremes there is the school of socialist thought, happily gaining in influence, that looks upon the unemployed not as unfortunates to be pitied, or as willing tools for the imminent revolutionary uprising, but as workers to be organized, led, educated as an integral part of the labor movement. The characteristics of this group are an understanding of the mass mind of the millions of unemployed, an appreciation of their problems, a patience with their backwardness in theory, a delight with their militancy in action.

For five years, since the question of organizing the unemployed has been agitating the ranks of the Socialist Party, these three schools, and innumerable intermediary ones, have waged an intellectual warfare for the supremacy of their point of view. It has been the continuation of mass unemployment itself, and the relative success of the "center" attitude in the Workers Alliance of America, which is leading today to a clearer and clearer understanding of the role of socialists in unemployed work. Yet, unfortunately, there does exist today in the party a vast inertness toward unemployed work, and a colossal indifference to the tremendous ferment of ideas with regard to social and economic problems, going on within the minds of millions of unemployed.

The continuation of the crisis exposes to the masses more sharply every day the weak link in the "liberalism" of Roosevelt. That weak link is his treatment of unemployment. Today it is generally acknowledged, as the writer

tried to point out a year ago, that unemployment, relief, WPA, etc., constitutes a major political issue of 1936. Nowhere has Roosevelt proved himself so vulnerable than in his relief policies. As a consequence, the Roosevelt generals are bending frantic energies to win the millions of unemployed votes, without at the same time paying for that support in terms of an improved standard of living for the jobless. Roosevelt thus finds himself in an unsolvable dilemma, and in that dilemma socialists find the possibilities of moving great masses toward the acceptance of socialism.

The urgent necessity for unemployed work has both positive and negative features in the immediate outlook. Yet in the long term, both spell the maintenance of democracy and the continued leftward movement of the American people.

The existence of such tremendous numbers of unemployed (12,600,000 according to the American Federation of Labor, 14,000,000 according to other experts) constitutes both a challenge and a danger. Leaderless, without sound understanding of the way out of their misery, cut off from contact with the organized workers in the trade unions, the millions of unemployed can be led into the camp of a clever fascist leader. How sweet to the ears of a disillusioned jobless worker, feeling his general uselessness, is the slogan of the late Huey Long, "every man a king." Or how enticing is the promise of $200 a month from the Old Age Revolving Fund, or the vague promise of Social Justice from Rev. Coughlin.

Millions of restless unemployed youth today are a challenge to all socialists. These young people driven to despair by continued unemployment must find a way out, and if socialists do not offer that leadership, some clever demagogue will. Socialists must help organize the unemployed, so that the fascist demagogue will not organize them.

To the trade union movement, the millions of unemployed are millions of potential scabs; and none know this better than the employing class. To try to build a powerful labor movement in the face of millions of desperate unemployed, is to try to fill a bucket with a hole in the bottom. Socialists must help organize the unemployed to protect the labor movement.

Face to face every day with the failure of their elected officials to give them adequate leadership, the unemployed quickly perceive the capitalist political control of our government. It needed no great treatise for the unemployed of New Jersey to recognize the necessity for working class political action. The delegates to the Workers Alliance national convention in April, who saw a Republican congressman from New York and a Democrat from Alabama join together to defeat an appeal for a small congressional appropriation, did not need to read Marx to realize that in the class struggle there is no difference between the capitalist parties. Socialists must organize the unemployed to teach them in action what text books can never teach.

The 1,000 WPA workers in Allentown who changed their registration from Democrat to Socialist may never have heard of Karl Marx. But they did know that their capitalist politicians had sold them out, and that socialists were working with them day by day to improve their standard of living. They reached the eminently practical American conclusion that the socialists had proved in deeds that their theories were

correct. The job of intensive education must follow this education in action.

Socialists who devote their energies to building the Workers Alliance of America look upon work among the unemployed in the following way:

They are convinced that the unemployment crisis will endure, and that as it goes on it will challenge, more and more, the bankruptcy of capitalism. They see that the liberal era of treatment of the unemployed is passing, that capitalism feels it has done enough for the unemployed, and it is time to liquidate relief expenditures.

These socialists look upon the unemployed of the American workers, of every trade and profession, as class brothers. They neither look down upon the unemployed as unfortunates, nor treat them as a separate class, to be used as tools. As socialists who must participate in every struggle of the workers for liberation, they see the need to give leadership and direction to the unemployed. They know that it is not necessary as Salvation Army lassies, to hand out a sermon with a plate of beans. They feel instead that by honest, patient, intelligent work with the unemployed, there will come a disappearance of prejudice against socialists, a respect and admiration for us, and then a desire to know more about socialist theory and principles.

These socialists have been repelled by the tactics of the communists, which have not yet vanished, that treat of the unemployed as a pawn in the political game. Such socialists as I now mention, do not look upon the unemployed as a medium into which to transfer political policies of the moment, but rather as a great mass of workers to lead, to educate, to encourage, and to help in their battle for the fundamental rights of a job and a decent standard of living.

These socialists see clearly that in the struggle for the Farmer-Labor Party the unemployed will be among the most earnest and devoted supporters, and the socialists teach patiently the necessity for independent working class political action. They do not hide the fact that they are socialists, nor do they insist upon the acceptance of socialism as a condition for assistance in the unemployed struggle.

These socialists see that the unemployed, properly trained and led, can be changed from a potential danger to the labor movement to a vast reservoir of strength. The constructive policies of the trade union have been taken up by the unemployed under socialist leadership. The fight for the prevailing wage rates on WPA, for the 30-hour week, for assistance in all strikes of labor, the struggle for civil liberties, have been equally the fight of the unemployed as of organized labor.

These socialists see the possibilities of a great economic as well as political alliance of the workers, that must include the millions of unemployed, and they work toward that end.

Socialists in the Workers Alliance realize that for sound growth, we must avoid the serious errors of communist work. We must avoid like the plague the iron control of a movement by socialists only. We must look upon the unemployed as a great mass of workers who will create with the necessary guidance, leaders of their own. It is our task to assist in that free development of leadership. From among the unemployed will arise their own demands, their own program. To these ideas, socialists must be open minded and they should not be fought merely because they do not conform 100% with socialist pro-

grams of the moment. Socialists in the Workers Alliance realize that there is no bright, marked road laid out for the unemployed to reach acceptance of socialism. Native Americans will try to arrange their own path for their salvation, and it is our job to encourage and assist all movements that are in the right general direction.

Because of this attitude and years of patient work, a mass organization of the unemployed exists today in the Workers Alliance of America. Genuine democratic control by the rank and file, an honest adherence to a non-partisan policy, honest dealings with the membership, has given the Workers Alliance a prestige that no other unemployed group has obtained in this country. As a result, fundamental working class ideas such as the right to a job with union wages, the possibilities of abundance in this country, the need for social and industrial democracy, the willingness to fight for genuine social insurance, has found support among the hundreds of thousands of members of the Workers Alliance, and millions outside of its ranks.

There is no doubt but that the reactionary forces in this country are alarmed at the growth and the militant but intelligent leadership of the Workers Alliance. Such actions as the Illinois Hunger March of 1935, the great August 17th, 1935 demonstrations, the occupation of the Wisconsin and New Jersey legislatures, the brilliant struggles in Indiana, New York, Maryland, Ohio and many other places, have shown that the unemployed are on the march and have taken the path toward a new social order. This found expression in the 1936 convention of the Workers Alliance of America when a declaration of principles calling for a new social order based on production for use and not for profit, was enthusiastically accepted by 900 delegates.

The reactionaries are also alarmed by the excellent relationship being built up between the Workers Alliance and the American Federation of Labor. Here again slowly but surely there is coming a recognition in labor circles that support of the organized unemployed must be a prime labor policy, and that the Workers Alliance of America deserves that support. The appearance of the secretary-treasurer of the A. F. L., Frank Morrison, at the second national convention of the Workers Alliance to give the greetings of the A. F. L., and a financial contribution to the Alliance from the A.F.L. following the convention, are indications that a new day is dawning in the labor movement. The possibilities of this relationship from the standpoint of economic and political action of the future are almost unlimited. What has been gained has been with the knowledge that the Workers Alliance has not sacrificed any of its fundamental principles or freedom of action. It has been gained principally because the A.F.L. has come to trust the leadership of the Workers Alliance and respect our program.

Socialist leadership was responsible for the agreement that led to the liquidation of all other unemployed groups into the Workers Alliance at the second national convention this year. Unity of the unemployed had been from the first a cardinal principle with socialists in unemployed work. Unity was accomplished as soon as it became possible to accomplish it without harming the movement in the process. The disappearance of all external strife in the movement, the disappearance of organizational rivalries make possible tremendous growth for the movement and

further great accomplishments. The unemployed, driven hardest by the crisis, have been able to prove to the labor movement their ability to sink differences of leadership, program, political interests into a broad mass organization.

The accomplishments of the past, although viewed with pride, are in themselves only a beginning. With a united organization, with growing labor support, with the increasing respect of millions of Americans, with a clearer and clearer conception of our goals, the Workers Alliance has boundless possibilities for service to the working class. Its ranks are wide open to socialists who seek to accomplish this service and who are willing to work without making sectarian or personal interests paramount. The movement is young, but it is healthy and vital. If the crisis persists the unemployed are destined with the pursuance of intelligent and constructive policies not only to serve the labor movement, but to provide leadership to labor in many fields. Those socialists who devote themselves to unemployed work look for an increased recognition of the value of this work among socialists generally. We look for a policy in the Socialist Party which says in effect, "every employed member of the party must joint his union, every unemployed member the Workers Alliance." As a result of our devoted work, our leadership, our understanding of the class struggle, will come a deep appreciation from the unemployed and a faith in us that will mean much in the years to come.

A WORD ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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The Hillquit Amendment Is Not Enough

by Edward Grove

THE scrapping of the NRA by America's Court of Last Illusion has justly aroused the class-conscious vanguard of America to a high pitch of resentment and indignation. The socialist answer to this brazen effrontry has been to revive an amendment written some years ago by the late Morris Hillquit. It is hardly my desire to quarrel with the good intentions of those responsible for this revival, but as a student of Constitutional law who has followed the Supreme Court, past and present, through its devious paths and by-paths, I should like to question the wisdom of this move. Although socialist newspaper headlines assuringly declare, "Pass the Hillquit Amendment — Stop Supreme Court Dictatorship," it is an unfortunate and unpleasant truth that the Hillquit Amendment will *not* stop Supreme Court dictatorship, and that as a *"Workers' Rights Amendment"* it is grossly inadequate.

Without any further preliminaries, there are three points I wish to make. (1) The Hillquit Amendment as it stands today is totally inadequate to meet the needs of organized labor in the American courts. (2) If the Hillquit Amendment is to be a genuine Workers' Rights Amendment, it must specifically provide, among other things, for the right of picketing, striking and collective bargaining. (3) Even if the proposed Amendment is made explicit in these matters, to the extent that the Supreme Court is still permitted to retain its power of interpreting the provisions of the Amendment, there is every likelihood that the purposes for which it was passed will be defeated by a process of judicial legislation.

It will require little detailed analysis to show how inadequate the proposed amendment is in terms of its avowed objectives. One of labor's greatest and most immediate needs today is to gain the right to organize nationally for collective bargaining and to obtain judicial recognition of that right. The simple and direct provisions of Section 7-A of the defunct NRA gave rise to bitter and unprecedented struggles without settling anything. (What the Supreme Court might have done ultimately to 7-A had labor succeeded in making genuine headway under it is a matter of the merest conjecture; the Schechter decision unceremoniously disposed of the entire question.) A careful reading and analysis of the Hillquit Amendment discloses no direct provision under which labor can organize and preserve its rights. The right of picketing, the outlawing of yellow-dog contracts, the elimination of labor injunctions and company unions—all crying needs if organized labor is to make any perceptible progress towards a more equitable distribution of the fruits of production—are not included within the scope of the Amendment.

Below are listed a few key cases, the more outstanding of the notorious anti-labor decisions of the Supreme Court which have annihilated labor's right to organize, strike and picket. These decisions have given every aid and comfort

to Big Business by putting all possible obstacles in the path of organized labor. More important, these judicial pronouncements are in full force and effect at this writing, and would still remain unimpaired after the passage of the Hillquit Amendment as it now stands:

Adair v. United States, 208 U.S. 161 (1908)
Coppage v. Kansas, 236 U.S. 1 (1915)

A Federal (Adair Case) or State (Coppage Case) law which forbids employers to discharge workers who join labor unions is unconstitutional because it deprives employers of their property without due process of law.

Hitchman Coal & Coke Company v. Mitchell, 245 U.S. 229 (1917)

A yellow-dog contract is legal. Union organizers who attempt to persuade workers to disregard such contracts and join a labor union may be restrained from carrying on this work by Court injunction.

The American Steel Foundries v. Tri-City Central Trades Council, 257 U.S. 184(1921)

Mass picketing is forbidden and illegal, and may be restrained by injunction. Pickets are limited, as the Court declared, "to one representative for each point of ingress and egress in the plant or place of business" (a totally ineffective gesture).

Truax v. Corrigan, 257 U.S. 312 (1921)

A state law which forbids the issuance of injunctions to employers against workers, in labor disputes, is unconstitutional because it "deprives the owner of the business and the premises of his property without due process of law."

Gompers v Buck Stove & Range Company, 221 U.S. 418 (1911)

Members of a labor union who engage in a boycott may be restrained by court injunction; failure to obey will result in fine or imprisonment.

Duplex Printing Press Company v. Deering, 254 U.S. 443 (1920)

Workers who engage in sympathetic strikes or secondary boycotts may be restrained by court injunction; failure to obey will result in fine or imprisonment.

Loewe v. Lawlor, 208 U.S. 274 (1908), 235 U.S. 522 (1914)

Officers and members of labor unions are liable under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act for treble the damages sustained as the result of an organized boycott.

United Mine Workers of America v. Coronado Coal Company, 259 U.S. 344 (1922), 268 U.S. 295 (1925)

A labor union itself is liable under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act for treble the damages sustained as the result of an organized strike, the payment of damages to be made from the union's treasury.

Dorchy v. Kansas, 272 U.S. 306 (1926)

There is no absolute right of American workers to strike which the Court will recognize. Justice Brandeis has declared, "Neither the common law, nor the Fourteenth Amendment, confers the right to strike."

These cases are not all, there are others, but they suffice to show that the words of the Hillquit Amendment, expressed or implied, cannot be made to cover the vicious anti-labor policy of the court. In short then, as significant as the Hillquit Amendment may be to eliminate child labor and make possible the regulation of commerce and industry by Congress, it falls far short of being a Workers' Rights Amendment. And the sooner it is recognized for what it is, the better.

To those adherents of the proposed Hillquit Amendment who are sorely troubled and perplexed by the issue I raise, I offer two alternatives for consideration. (1) Either the Hillquit Amendment must itself be amended by additional provisions granting workers such rights as collective bargaining and picketing, and prohibiting labor injunctions, yellow-dog contracts and company unions, in unequivocal terms not likely to be rendered nugatory by Court interpretations; or (2) if such an iron-clad amendment is impossible, the idea of a Hillquit Amendment in its present or revised form should be abandoned, and another amendment substituted which outrightly deprives the Court of its

powers to invalidate Congressional and state legislation.

Let us deal with each of these proposals in turn.

It is beginning to be more and more recognized by those who accept the Marxian analysis of the Court (as presented by Harold J. Laski, for example—and this, I take it, includes most left-wing dissenters from orthodox jurisprudence), that the formulation of a completely foolproof amendment which cannot be subverted by the Court is an impossible task. As the reader needs scarcely be told, Constitutional Law is not an exact science; the Court's decisions are not inevitable from the facts and law in each case. The law is what the Court declares it to be, no more, no less. Judicial bias is not unknown; education, legal tradition, political affiliation and economic interest make impartiality hardly possible. Despite its own denials, the Supreme Court has a distinct pro-capitalist social philosophy which permeates its majority opinions, a philosophy which can be well summed up in the following propositions which I have taken from Laski's "Democracy in Crisis" (pp. 130-133):

1. " . . . the essential assumption upon which the Court has proceeded has been the undesirability of hampering by law the relations of capitalist and wage-earner, on the one hand, and the necessity, on the other, of maintaining the rights of property to the established expectations it has accumulated."

2. "What, in fact, the American judiciary has done with the Constitution is to shape its outlines so that they have become the protective rampart of capitalist principles. . . ."

3. "What Mr. Justice Holmes has called the 'inarticulate major premise' was the acceptance of capitalist democracy as Nature's social order; and they have interpreted the law consistently to conform to its assumptions."

4. "There is no equality before the law, there cannot be such equality, until the conditions which make inequality profitable to those who benefit by it are removed; and that removal is unattainable so long as the assumptions of capitalist philosophy dominate the practice of the courts."

The contention of the Court that it is an impersonal oracle, dispensing justice to rich and poor, propertied and propertyless alike, may therefore safely be dismissed.

If the Hillquit Amendment is passed, either in its original form or in a revised form which attempts to remedy the shortcomings I have indicated, the question of judicial interpretation must inevitably arise. Specific legislation will have to be passed to carry out its general principles, and sooner or later, a case will come before the Court for adjudication. What can we expect from a Court dominated by a philosophy of capitalism, motivated by the desire to maintain the status quo, prejudiced against organized labor from the very outset?

The history of the Fourteenth Amendment affords an illuminating example of what is likely to come. Designed to protect the civil rights of Negroes, its effectiveness was completely destroyed by the Supreme Court in the Civil Rights Cases, 109 U.S. 3 (1883). Pursuant to the Fourteenth Amendment, a Congressional act provided:

" . . . all persons . . . shall be entitled to the full and equal enjoyment of the accommodations . . . of . . . theatres and other places of public amusement; subject only to the conditions and limitations established by law, and applicable alike to citizens of every race and color. . . ."

This statute was declared unconstitutional; according to the Court's somewhat involved and dubious reasoning, Congress had no such legislative power under the Fourteenth Amendment. In consequence, the Negro has never received legal protection of his constitu-

tional rights; instead, the "due process" clause of the amendment has been used to protect corporations and to invalidate legislation designed for the social and economic amelioration of the working classes.

What assurances are there, what reason to make us believe that the Hillquit Amendment will not suffer a similar fate and oblivion? This is especially true since that disreputable "due process" clause still remains intact, under which all sorts of manipulations and "pharisaic legalisms" will still be possible. If the economic crises confronting a contracting capitalist system continue to sharpen and socialism becomes a real threat to the existing order, a Court dominated by capitalist philosophy will stop at nothing to maintain the hegemony of the capitalist class.

Louis B. Boudin, a Marxian critic of the Court whose two monumental volumes, "Government by Judiciary," entitle him to be heard with consideration and respect, says:

" . . . it is not only practically impossible to amend the Constitution, but almost useless. For not only can amendments be interpreted away; they can also be made, by interpretation, a new source of new and undreamed-of ills. . . ."

"There is only one way to amend the Constitution and that is by depriving the Supreme Court of the power to declare acts of Congress unconstitutional. . . ." (The Nation, July 10, 1935, p. 41.)

What is the significance of this opinion? Does it mean that the situation admits of no other interpretation? Decidedly not! But if an anti-capitalist and a friend of labor can see loopholes in Constitutional amendments, a reactionary Court intent upon salvaging capitalism surely will.

Let us not console ourselves with the usual platitude that the Hillquit Amendment is "a step in the right direction." That is not enough. As it stands, it cannot in all honesty and conscience be called a "Workers' Rights" Amendment; it fails to provide for the most elementary rights of picketing, striking and collective bargaining. I submit that an addition to the Hillquit Amendment can be made to include explicit provisions for these needs; this is one way out of the dilemma. But the Court will still be left in a position of supreme control, able to pass upon and interpret the provisions of the Amendment. In the light of its unique function of being the Supreme Executive Committee of American capitalism, the probabilities are that the provisions of the Amendment will be whittled away in the process of construction and interpretation, leaving labor still very much in the same predicament as today. From this, it is not unreasonable for militant foes of the present order who do not wish to create any false illusions concerning the efficacy of Constitutional amendments to conclude that the most effective way to fight American capitalism is to strike a direct blow at the Court by a Constitutional amendment outrightly abolishing its powers of invalidating congressional and state legislation.

SEND YOUR RENEWAL!

Youth's Economic Problem

Ernest Erber

VIRTUALLY throughout its history, the Socialist Youth Movement had to deal with two different factors in determining its role. The first arose out the situation within the movement as a whole. From the 1900's when the revolutionary youth were led by Karl Liebknecht to the 1930's when they are led by Fernand Godefroid, head of the Belgium Young Socialist Guard, the internal situation in the movement demanded that the youth be a revolutionizing force, combating all reformist and social-patriotic tendencies, and leading the way to a revolutionary movement. This was its political role, a role made necessary by the existence of their adult sections as reformist or centrist parties.

The second factor arose out of the attempt to determine how the Young Socialist movement could best accomplish its organizational task of winning the youth for socialism. This involved answering the question of whether youth was a particular economic group, with economic problems peculiar to it, or whether youth was merely an age group, only psychologically different from adults. If one felt that there were particular economic problems of youth, one then favored a highly politicalized, disciplined Socialist Youth movement that sought to give leadership to the masses of youth in their immediate economic struggles. If one thought that youth was only a psychological group, one favored a youth movement that catered to youth's psychology through cultural and recreational activities and sought incidentally to educate them to socialism.

The European socialist youth have a much simpler problem in dealing with the second factor, the question of whether youth has economic problems of its own. The existence of sharp class divisions among youth, with the majority of the employed workers serving as apprentices, made the existence of a special youth problem obvious. Young workers were continually struggling to better the terms under which apprentices serve. This meant fighting the employers to better working conditions and fighting within the trade union movement for full membership rights for apprentices. Not only did a youth economic problem exist but young workers were keenly aware of it.

The existence of a special youth problem in pre-depression America was a debatable question. The number of apprentices make up only a small fraction of the 4,000,000 employed youth in America. The bulk of the 2,000,000 employed in manufacture are to be found in the mass production industries, particularly where their young bodies can better resist the physical wear and tear of the speed-up as on the belt line in the auto industry, or they are found in the "youth industries" like radio, candy, novelties, etc. Over 132,000 of them are found in mining. These are all industries from which the apprentice system has disappeared with the advent of mass production or where it never existed.

The employment system in use in certain industries like textiles, known as the "learners' system", is not an apprenticeship system, but a method by which young workers can be employed for less than the wages adults receive while they do the same amount of work.

Even granting the many abuses which young workers were subjected to in American industry prior to the depression, abuses which on examination were usually found to be identical with the problems of their adult fellow-workers, one can hardly say that their sum total constituted an economic problem for one section of the working class of such magnitude that the role and character of the Socialist Youth movement could be determined by it.

However, since the beginning of the present crisis, there has developed a social phenomenon in relation to youth that has made the existence of a special youth economic problem no longer debatable. The existence of this problem has become so apparent that the term the "youth problem" has become a common and familiar expression in discussions among social workers, educators, and more recently, leading trade unionists.

The development of this problem is the result of a generation going through the normal periods of childhood, school, and—then discovering that the gates to the next period of life, employment, are closed to them. It meant that one generation has developed for which capitalism has no use, even as wage slaves. It meant that along with the surplus supplies of cotton and pork and other raw materials, capitalism had developed a surplus generation of wage slaves. It meant that in addition to the some ten million workers who were discarded after longer or shorter periods of service in capitalist production, an entirely new crop of wage workers had appeared who were unwanted, unneeded, locked-out. It is the existence of this locked-out generation that presents the American socialist movement with a youth problem of greater political significance than the traditional youth problem the European movement has faced.

There are close to 22,000,000 people in America in the 16 - 25 age group. Of these one million attend college, five million high school, four million are employed steadily, and two million part time. This leaves ten million unaccounted for. Of these, three million are on the relief rolls and 1,068,400 are getting transient relief. This leaves some six million completely unprovided for. Without knowing how many of the three million on home relief might be employed by the WPA it is safe to say that there are about seven or eight million young people who are neither at work nor in school.*

Yet, even this figure of seven or eight million does not tell the whole story. This excludes the two million young people listed as part time workers which might mean anything from several evenings' work behind a soda fountain to a Saturday afternoon's work as a grocery clerk, certainly not more than enough for incidental expenses. In addition to this it does not include the new development on the student field, the emergence of the "student-by-necessity."

The emergence of this type of student is the result of students choosing to remain in school rather than join the ranks of the jobless outside. The following figures on ***high school*** attend-

* Above figures from article by Morris B. Schnapper, economics advisor of the National Youth Administration.

ance tell the story of this type of student. In 1923 there were 3,000,000 attending high school; by 1930, seven years later, 4,500,000. Five years later, in 1935, there were 6,000,000. Compare the above figures with the following for the same years giving attendance in *elementary schools.* In 1923 there were 19,000,000, in 1930 the peak of 21,300,000, and in 1935 attendance again dropped to the 1923 mark of 19,000,000 despite increased population during twelve years. There is only one explanation. High school students are remaining in school despite the sacrifices it entails rather than waste their time in total idleness while families are finding it increasingly difficult to provide the money for clothes, carfare, books, and lunch to keep children in elementary schools.

Despite the increase in high school attendance there were 800,000 who gave up the struggle to remain in school last year and dropped out before graduating.

In an article in "Progressive Education" in January, 1935, Prof. Mark May of Yale said:

> "I am convinced that the danger in the present situation is not that these 5,000,000 (idle) young will start a revolution, or a new political party, but that they will stagnate emotionally, lose their driving force, and become wards of their communities."

I do not believe a Marxist can agree with Prof. May. Nor do we see youth making a revolution. For, if we felt that it is possible for seven or eight million young people to become a locked-out generation and remain satisfied with their lot, year after year, without responding to the appeal of some political group to fight to change their conditions, then our hope that the working class will respond to the leadership of the revolutionary party is also futile. Certainly if these millions of young people who still have hope and ambition and whose every attempt to better their lot brings them into conflict, not merely with an individual employer, but with the government and the economic system it defends, cannot be won for the socialist revolution then it is likewise impossible to win the workers at present employed more or less steadily.

It is also important to realize that this locked-out generation is not a static number. The Department of Education of the federal government states that yearly 2,225,000 young people leave our schools to enter the labor market. Of these only 5% are equipped with a college education, 45% with a high school education, while 50% have not even finished high school. In 1930 the members of the 16 - 25 year age group constituted 27% of the total unemployed. By last year they mounted so disproportionately with the general tendency of unemployment that they constituted 50% of the total unemployed. I regard these latter figures by Mr. Schnapper to be the most significant discovered in relation to this problem. Entering the labor market at the rate of 2,225,000 a year, and with a smaller percentage of them being employed yearly, how large a percentage of the total unemployed will youth constitute by 1940?

Young people who are 25 years of age today entered the labor market when the depression was in its earliest stage and opportunities still remained. There are therefore only 15.6% of this age unemployed today. Those who entered the labor market a year later, and are 24 today, had much more difficulty finding work. There are 22.5% of their number unemployed, an increase of 7%. It is thus apparent that a smaller and smaller number of each age group is finding employment. A large number

of every yearly age group has *never worked.* It is estimated that nearly 2,000,000 of the 16 - 25 age group never had a job, 140,000 in New York City alone.

Aubrey Williams, director of the National Youth Administration, is responsible for the statement that "Millions of those now out of jobs will never find jobs again."

The task of winning these youths who "will never find jobs again" to the socialist way out of their dilemma can only be carried out by a socialist youth movement which stands out before this lock-out generation as a force courageous, strong, and intelligent enough to make youth an ally of the labor movement and lead it in its immediate economic struggles, and finally, in the fight for its emancipation.

To say that if we do not win the youth they will fill the ranks of the fascist legions as in Italy and Germany is no idle platitude. All people aware of the problem are realizing the danger. George Holland, one-time educational director for C.C.C. camps, said during the hearings on the American Youth Act:

> "Having worked in the camps in Germany, and having had some experience with the problems of youth in Germany, I think I recognize the terrific consequences that can come from the neglect of youth.
>
> "I have heard the National Socialist youth try to justify the extreme measures they have taken against the Jews, internationalists, liberals, even their mere political opponents by saying, 'We suffered following the war, we were unable to lead a normal life, and now we must resort to force.' I see no immediate danger of our youth going to the extremes to which youth went in Germany, but I think I can recognize that it is a possibility and we cannot afford, as a country, to permit our youth to deteriorate as they are at present, without jobs and without educational opportunities."

Progressive trade unionists are also recognizing this danger. Francis Gorman, vice-president of the United Textile Workers, said at the same hearing:

> "Let us now turn to a far graver phase —the political implication of a demobilized, disinherited, and disillusioned youth. We have the burning examples of how young men and women can be tragically mobilized by the forces of reaction to form the bulk of the mass support for fascism. Germany and Italy have taught us the cynical fashion in which youth are recruited to dig their own mental and spiritual graves. We do not want this to happen to the young boys and girls of America."

We now have a "youth problem" on American soil. Educators and social workers have recognized it. Progressive trade unionists see its dangers. The government has been forced to deal with it through its transient camps, its CCC, and its NYA. Socialists must recognize it and understand that the existence of a disciplined, politicalized Young Peoples' Socialist League that can lead this locked-out generation in their immediate struggles for the American Youth Act and other measures, and win them for socialism is a vital need. It is to be hoped that the delegates at Cleveland understand the problem and make adequate provisions for the building of a powerful Young Socialist Movement in America.

Party Perspectives: Present and Future

by Frank N. Trager

I.

THE National Convention beginning on May 23rd will close a two year chapter in the history of the Socialist Party of peculiar significance. Peculiar in that questions of principle, as represented by the Detroit Declaration and the Draft Program of the "Militant" socialists, played a prominent role in the life of the party for the first time in many years. Significant because despite inner party conflict socialists, actually without benefit of party (Old Guard or militant) direction or help, were strategically active in building and guiding certain mass organizations of workers including farm workers.

Obviously we cannot quit this convention without further clarification on questions of principle. In doing this we are forging an answer to one of the two fundamental issues facing the party: What kind of *socialist* party do we want? Shall we surrender our party to the socialism of the City or to the "social democracy" of the Old Guard (which will eventually attach the Old Guard to the tail of the Roosevelt or "progressive" kite)? Or shall we build an aggressive, militant socialist party committed to the overthrow of the social system known as capitalist, which overthrow will be a revolutionary act? Shall this socialist party be itself the instrument for socialism; that is, will it become a *mass* revolutionary party or must it utilize the political, *transitional* tactic of a Farmer-Labor Party in order to prepare workers for the final, socialist road to power?

These, and other questions of principle (e. g. our relation to the Soviet Union and international socialism, war thesis, revolutionary proletarian unity, the agrarian question, Negro and other minorities question) and the tactics which follow from principle are the facets of the many sided issue: What kind of *socialist* party do we want?

But equally obvious is it that we can not quit this convention without *opening* discussion on the second of the two fundamental issues: *How* shall this kind of socialist party vitalize its theoretical decisions? What practices are necessary to give life to our principles? What organizational and structural changes are demanded to concretize our resolutions? This issue is the concern of what follows.

II.

What specific organizational and structural perspectives are necessary now and for the immediate future in order to concretize the purpose of this kind of socialist party?

The answer to this question emerges out of an examination of past and present mistakes and weaknesses. Some of these are well recognized in the party but their recognition has not yet brought about their elimination.

1. **National Constitution:** Article I, Section 1, holds that "the name of this organization shall be the Socialist Party of the United States of America." A

working class interpretation of this and subsequent sections, particularly Article X (on State and Local Organizations) and Article XV (on Foreign Language Organizations) cannot allow this to mean that we shall have a *federated* party of 48 state organizations and several foreign language organizations. Nor can it allow for regional, state, district or local autonomy on *fundamental* questions of principle *and* tactic. Our constitution deserves the same criticism that we, as socialists, have made of the United States Constitution; it is a horse and buggy vehicle for an aviational age. A working class party that pretends to work for the successful eventuation of a revolutionary act is stupid in the extreme if it permits Locals in cities and counties and state organizations to act at cross purposes. While we should keep, at least for the present, the electoral divisional organization boundaries we should take steps at once to centralize our National Organization by changing our constitution. (It is of course understood that mere constitutional changes will not accomplish this but constitutional changes plus inner-socialist discussion, education and discipline can do this.)

The reorganization of party structure should include the liquidation of the ambiguous and contradictory Language Federations. They have outlived their usefulness at best. Conditions of immigration and mass literacy in the United States have terminated the need for this type of organization. If Jewish, Italian, Slavic, Finnish (etc.) speaking individuals happen to live in the *same* precinct, ward or town then upon fulfilling the minimum conditions for party branches or locals they can be granted a charter. They, preferably, should be integrated in the regular branches of the community. If for reasons of national cultural associations they wish to perpetuate a group membership this can be done by dual non-party membership rather than by diluting their socialist time and activity in the same meeting with other activity. Dual membership is not foreign to us. Many socialists belong not only to the party but to churches, unions, professional, and sport associations and other forms of cultural groupings.

Recently we have seen the growth of functional, as distinguished from geographical branches. Does consistency with the foregoing require the avoidance of this form of organization? Or are there valid distinctions between branches and locals, based merely upon the accident of nationality as opposed to branches and locals created out of the job, the economic identification of worker interest localized in shop or trade? To state the question is to offer the answer. For guidance at this time it appears to me that we should adhere first to the geographical or electoral base, next to the building of fractions on the job, third the formation of leagues of all job-fractions. Both fractions and leagues of course, operate as a block within the unions. And, fourth, only if the foregoing fails to meet the requirements should we organize functional units. This should be our present practice. If reaction and growing fascism succeed in limiting further our democratic rights then it is at once apparent that what is fourth becomes first!

This centralization can be democratically brought about if the National Organization Committee or some similar body is empowered by the membership to regionalize its activities on a full-time basis. That is, set up regional divisions of the National Organization Committee

with full time staff and power to act. If the cry is raised that we are attempting to create a monolithic party it can be truthfully denied on the ground that such decisions as are *carried out* are arrived at not by some top leadership but by membership and convention vote.

Above all we must make it impossible for socialists in town or state to flout national decisions—as has been done; and for socialists in the South to act on any important question of principle differently from socialists in the North or vice versa. More emphatically we must make it impossible for socialists in certain cities to determine the course of the movement mainly in the light of their local experience—and this is as true of New York as it is of Milwaukee, Reading and Bridgeport.

2. **National Executive Committee:** The present type and activity of the National Executive Committee would be ludicrous in the extreme if it were not so tragic. Here, the ruling body of the party between conventions, (Articles IV and V), the body that hopes to assist in determination of working class victory meets once every three months for three days! Nor is it prescribed that members of this body shall devote their full or part time between such meeting to guiding national affairs. Only the accident of his career has made it possible for at least one member of the present National Executive Committee to be a full-time party person. Every other member "squeezes-in" national party affairs between periods of personal occupation.

Either it should be required that the National Executive Committee be constituted by full time party members or else the National Executive Committee should immediately elect or appoint a full time Action Committee which would be in almost continuous day to day contact if not in day to day session. In any event the National Executive Committee must be made to function as a *National* Executive Committee—nor can any of its members, regardless of how high his standing, reserve the right to neglect its meetings and to hold himself aloof from its decisions as was recently the case!

3. **The Party Machinery of the National Executive Committee.**

a. **National Office and National Secretary.** It has long been a debated question within the party as to the location of the National Office. Certainly the National Office should not be in Chicago! The effectiveness of a national office is determined not by its spatial location but rather its command of the *national* scene in terms of national actions, legislative, publicistic, informational, and relations to mass organizations (e.g. trade unions, anti-war, etc.). That is, it is assumed that the National Office is not the office for organization but is the office for national *policy making*. Obviously Washington D. C. should be the home of the National Office. The danger of becoming merely a lobby in the national capital can easily be averted by a properly conceived National Office.

In this connection the role of the national secretary and his staff should be examined. Apart from the specific assignments of a national secretary we permit a condition to continue that no words here printable are strong enough to describe. The national secretary of a party has a staff smaller than some locals! He virtually has no assistants to supervise the important activity of NEC sub-committee work. He is office boy, letter writer, carrier-out of national policy, organizational and legislative secretary, fund raiser all-in-one.

And startling as it may appear the present national secretary has made of the National Office something infinitely better than what it used to be. It should be axiomatic that the national secretariat is adequately staffed and financed. It should be axiomatic that on this staff there ought to be a sufficiency of national organizers so as to cover each state in which the state organization has not yet arranged for its own organization staff. At present our one full time organizer has requested a leave of absence!

Finally the national secretary, though "employed" by the N.E.C. should not be merely a silent, efficient administrator of policies but an active catalyst in the determination of policy—for who, better than he can describe the objective conditions of the party!

b. **The Sub-Committees of the N.E.C.** Presumably the work the sub-committees, especially, labor, agriculture, organization, public affairs should be an almost continuous activity. The obverse is true. And yet it is through these sub-committees that the work of party membership in the mass organizations is directed. Think of the utter neglect by the party of the Workers Alliance—and in turn the non-party attitude of many socialists within the Alliance. Think of our failure to support a National Labor Secretary to guide our work in the trade unions. Think of our complete neglect of any adequate handling of national agricultural problems. The recital can be extended. It is a record of party organizational inadequacy.

The remedy is so obvious that it hardly needs statement. If there are to be sub-committees of the National Executive Committee they have to function, they need a staff—and the prime duty of this staff is to direct party activity within the mass organizations of workers and farmers. The failure to apply this remedy is apparent on any cursory survey of socialist action in mass movements.

III.

The party perspectives which have been here presented can be summarized as follows:

1. The National Organization shall be a centralized democratically controlled party.
2. There shall be a liquidation of language federations as such; (though dual membership in party and non-party organizations is in no way contrary to socialist principles).
3. Functional as distinguished from electoral organizations should be a fourth choice during the period in which democratic rights prevail.
4. The National Executive Committee shall be truly national, shall be composed either of a majority of full time party workers or it shall elect or appoint an equivalent Action Committee. Its meetings shall be more frequent than quarterly, its Action Committee shall be in almost continuous session.
5. The National Office shall be transferred to the National Capital. Its secretariat shall be adequately staffed and truly executive.
6. The secretaries of the National Executive sub-committees shall be charged with continuous supervision and guidance of socialist work within mass organizations.
7. Although this has not been here argued it is obvious that the financing of the party machinery should be based on the principle of capacity to pay (Income Tax) and not flat rate membership dues.

Much of what has been here written has made the rounds of socialist conversation. This, however, is the first time that the subject matter, as whole, and in relation to its theoretical base has appeared in a socialist journal. It is hoped that it will inaugurate a rapid

crystallization of opinion on these matters so that at the convention we can take the first steps in bringing about changes. It may well be the case that in 1937 following the Presidential Campaign we should convene a Constitutional Convention to reorganize the formal and functional structure of the party! The alternative to this action in whole or in part but promotes provincialism, disorganization, and party paralysis on the field of national and mass action. Let us make our choice—and utilize this year of socialist campaign activity to rebuild and bring up to date socialist organization.

Symposium on Important Problems of the Socialist Party:

A Labor Party **The United Front** **Party Discipline**
War and Fascism **Trade Union Policy** **Party Structure**

There will be no nationwide Farmer-Labor party in the field this year of any strength or importance. It is already too late for plans for such a party to be made. It is clear that labor officials are too thoroughly committed to Roosevelt to start such a party and I am wholly opposed to socialists and certain others getting together and calling themselves a Farmer-Labor party before they can get large sections of organized farmers and workers into such a party. I am the more opposed because the formation of such a party would mean watering down our platform, as the communists desire, at a time when we want to insist more than ever upon the necessity for socialism.

The communist enthusiasm for a Farmer-Labor party and the way they have expressed it has hurt rather than helped the formation of such a party and makes a united front more, not less, difficult. For reasons I have repeatedly given I am opposed to organic union with the communists. It is out of the question. I am more and more opposed to a parliamentary united front with them. They themselves have made that more and more difficult by some of their recent opportunistic tactics and by the methods they have employed in handicapping socialists, as for instance, recently in Danbury, Conn. I am *for* joint action with communists and others in specific cases where the issues can be clearly defined and the methods of cooperation clearly worked out. Such specific cases are May Day demonstrations where they add to the strength of labor, defenses of workers' liberties, etc.

Norman Thomas

Behind the agitation for a Farmer-Labor party lie mixed motives and confused ambitions. A party of substance depends upon the workers and farmers themselves. What they don't yet want we can't create for them. Approaches we can try; these have worked well it appears in Toledo, but badly in Danbury, Connecticut, where the political football was kicked back and forth between Communists and Republicans while Socialists ran without the ball in their hands. Alertness to build a true party of farmers and workers is the need; but not hysterical haste to build on thin air.

Devere Allen, Connecticut
N.E.C., Socialist Party.

There are united fronts and united fronts. Undoubtedly, the chief need in the country today is not that of bringing together in one united front socialists and communists. In the 1932 election, only one voter out of every 40 citizens who cast their ballot for President voted the socialist and communist tickets. Only one out of 800 voters are members of either the Socialist or Communist Party. The main job of the Socialist Party is to get hold of the great majority of men and women who labor, and persuade them to build a political movement of farmers and workers dedicated to a cooperative world. In considering any

joint action with the movements of the Left, we should constantly consider whether such cooperation will aid us or hinder us in reaching and mobilizing the great masses now outside of the parties of labor.

Any organic unity with the communists; any parliamentary alliances at this time would, it seems to me, hinder us in performing this task. However, there are times when, I think, we have cooperated, and may cooperate in the future with labor and other progressive groups to which communists belong in the fight against such specific evils of the capitalist system as war, unemployment and the suppression of civil liberties.

The party, I believe, in the Herndon, Sacramento and other cases, has cooperated to the advantage of itself and the cause with organizations in which communists were represented.

When President Dubinsky of the I.L.G.W.U. in the labor demonstration at the Polo Grounds, New York City, introduced Jay Lovestone, communist, as a speaker, following his introduction of Herbert Morrison, Louis Waldman, B. C. Vladeck, myself and many others, a united front was effected that every group in the socialist movement seemed to consider legitimate.

Is not the question then, not the elimination of all cooperative efforts, but the careful and wise selection of those efforts which will stop the trend toward economic and political disaster and advance the cause of labor emancipation?

Harry W. Laidler, New York
Chairman Exec. Comm., Local N. Y.

Whenever labor makes up its mind to create its own political instrument, we must loyally support such action, just as we support genuine (not company) unions even though they have no conscious revolutionary character. Thereby we gain experience, establish the confidence of the workers, and place ourselves in a position where our influence may be effectively felt. This will undoubtedly place us at times in somewhat embarrassing positions; this is not to be avoided except at the price of isolation and sterility. Our cooperation with the LaFollette venture cost us much confusion; nevertheless I believed then and I still believe that if we had sabotaged even this abortive attempt at independent labor action we should have forfeited all right to claim that we have faith in the working class and in democracy.

Albert Sprague Coolidge, Massachusetts
N.E.C., Socialist Party.

After settling the internal situation, the party must decide whether it is to be the mass party of the American workers and take the place of any possible Labor Party, or if it is to be a revolutionary force working as a unit, first for the establishment of such a party and second, within such a party, in order to push it toward a socialist goal. Until we settle this matter our party will be hopelessly inadequate to face any of the problems confronting it.

If the question is brought before the convention in a clean-cut fashion, the delegates will clearly understand the problem and will support a revolutionary party approach.

We would then be compelled to make basic changes in our party set-up. Such a party would be more centralized, avoiding our own past weaknesses and the C.P. rigidity. Our press would be supervised by a National Committee and we would no longer be treated to the spectacle of party papers with different approaches on fundamental questions. Our party would be a disciplined party with positive discipline as well as negative. Positive discipline would require party members to assume obligations so that our party would first of all *act*, and second, *act together* in the unions, in the Workers Alliance, in the fraternal organizations, etc.

Let us work so that we can achieve this change at this convention.

Jack Altman, Executive Secretary
Socialist Party, Local N. Y.

The 1936 convention should draw up a carefully detailed statement defining a *genuine* Farmer-Labor party and mapping out a program of socialist action towards its achievement.

The fact that a large section of organized labor is, for doubtful reasons, still pro-Roosevelt; that most farmers' organizations are not yet ready for independent political action; that our friends on the right, the Communist Party, are sunk in a debauch of opportunism which gives a Farmer-Labor label to opportunism worse than the hey-day of A. F. of L. "reward-defeat" old party politics; these facts make it more, not less, important

that we state our position and begin work *now* for building the firm foundations for a genuine political federation of bona fide workers' and farmers' organizations.

On what we can accomplish *before* November depends real accomplishment for the campaigns of 1938 and 1940.

Glen Trimble, State Secretary
California Socialist Party.

All conscientious members of the Socialist Party are opposed to war, but increasingly there are distinctions as to what kind of war. Are we only against war between capitalist countries and in favor of fighting Japan if that country is in arms against Soviet Russia? Are we for sanctions, or against them? These are questions on which there is no unanimity in the party.

The party is more in accord on fascism, at least against European fascism; we all oppose it, but when it comes to fascist tendencies in the United States we are far from having absolutely defined policies. The largest peace-time naval program, the power that the government has over the unemployed on PWA projects and CCC camps, the aggressive defense of the Constitution as opposed to social legislation—all these and many more are dangerous tendencies toward fascism, but they are not always strenuously opposed.

Elizabeth Gilman, Maryland
Former S. P. candidate for Governor.

Among the questions confronting the convention, the united front, and its corollary, organic unity, will be prominent. The convention will do well to take a definite stand on them. The united front as now advanced by the Communist Party, leads finally to organic unity. Organic unity implies that there are no differences between the socialist and communist positions on matters important to the workers' movement.

The present communist attitude on war; control over the communist parties in the various countries by the Comintern; the communist use of slogans, of which the present agitation for a labor party is an example; the communist concept of discipline; the communist distortion of the dictatorship of the proletariat are important grounds for rejecting organic unity. They are important reasons for rejecting a united front, if that implies a common electoral platform.

United action for specific purposes (i.e. May Day demonstrations, strikes, action in defense of civil liberties) are essential. It is also essential to meet the communists in public debate. The *united front*, in the sense of ultimate organic unity, is wrong in principle and should be clearly rejected by the convention.

David P. Berenberg.

Socialists of every variety are against war and fascism. We agree that we cannot fight one without fighting the other, for war breeds fascism and fascism can survive only by fanning the flames of war.

Where socialists differ is as to possible compromise. Are we liberals, favoring "good" wars and "good" fascism, or are we radicals, attacking all wars, League or anti-League, international or civil? As to fascism, this is merely a name for the capitalist totalitarian state. The workers' totalitarian state is no less a dictatorship, perpetuating itself by suppression of liberty.

If we oppose fascism only because of its capitalist nature, then we need only make clear the connection; if we oppose the totalitarian state as such, then we must cease to apologize vaguely for dictatorship on our own side, either in the present or the future.

Have we socialists a philosophy as to war and fascism, or do we accept that of the League of Nations liberals on the one hand and the communists on the other?

Jessie Wallace Hughan
Member Exec. Comm., Local N. Y.

The Socialist Party has had correct policies on all of the important problems with which the American workers have recently been faced—the Labor Party, industrial unionism, war and fascism, the Supreme Court acts, Epic and its cousins, etc. But being correct isn't enough. A correct policy is of value only if it results in proper action. Considerable criticism has been made, particularly on the war question, that the socialists are interested only in being correct, not in doing something to fight war. Such a criticism follows from insufficient activity to mobilize the workers for anti-war struggle along the lines of our correct program. It has also been pointed out that while individual socialists have done splendid work in organizing and fighting for the unemployed, their efforts

have not received the necessary backing of the party organizations, nor has the party as a whole sufficiently engaged in this work. Other fields may be cited. Clarity alone is inadequate. We need clarity *and* action.

The work of educating the party membership and the working class does not belong only in the classroom. Clarity comes from experience. Education through activity in the class struggle is basic. Classroom work is only supplementary. A sect confines itself to education, but a revolutionary party can grow only by mass work, by standing at the head of every movement which springs out of the needs of the working class.

The Socialist Party must be a party of action.

Herbert Zam, New York
Editorial Board, Socialist Call.

A Labor or Farmer-Labor party is probably the next step in the development of working class political consciousness in this country. Full recognition of its belatedness, its limitations and functions at this stage of capitalist decline need not prevent our participation in such a party as an organized, revolutionary vanguard. With the capitulation of the Communist Party to populist liberalism, the Socialists—as opposed to the Social-Democrats—are the only group left which can perform this very necessary function within a mass party of labor. We must insist, however, during the present formative period of such a movement, that a *labor* party is a *labor* party—not an aggregation of assorted and conflicting political peeves, crackpot factions and fellow-travellers of Mr. Browder. All of these last will probably find a place within the periphery of any mass labor party. But in such a party, labor itself must sit at the controls.

Lillian Symes, California
Author and Journalist.

Just as the May Day demonstrations throughout the country prove the possibility of socialist, trade-unionist and communist cooperation in carrying through a *specific common action,* so Earl Browder's speech before the American Youth Congress one week later proves the impossibility of a *general united front* pact between Socialist and Communist Parties. Browder's entire orientation for the present is, by indirection, to build up Roosevelt as the "people's" bulwark against fascism and war.

The main slogan of the C. P. in 1936 is: "Keep Hoover, Landon and Hearst out of power." This means put Roosevelt in power or it means nothing!

The C. P. states that a "Republican victory . . . would throw the United States in the international front with those forces that are making for war." This is a negative way of saying that Roosevelt will "keep us out of war."

Socialists can not compromise with such a dangerous philosophy, especially since it is made an immediate issue. We must criticise it and do so as strongly as we know how. This we can not do with our hands tied by a general united front pact on the basis of common allegiance to one program.

Gus Tyler, New York
Editorial Board, Socialist Call.

There is a tendency to ignore the element of time and space in our discussions on the question of a Labor Party. Marxists are for a Labor Party only when it would constitute a progressive step. This means that we can speak only of the present and of the immediate future. A Labor Party based on the trade unions and created *now* when the workers are clinging to the capitalist parties would be a step forward.

This eliminates the possibility of the acceptance by Marxists of the "if and when" theory. That theory says: if and when the trade unions decide to create a Labor Party we shall favor and participate in such a party. Assume that if and when the trade union bureaucrats decide on such a step the Socialist Party will have a mass base. The attempt to create, and the creation of a Labor Party, under those circumstances would be a step backward and it would be our duty to oppose any such step.

It follows that revolutionary socialists, although ready to participate in the formation of a Labor Party when it will mean a progressive step, must do their utmost to strengthen our party so that the necessity for a labor party will be done away with.

Albert Goldman, Illinois.
Editor, Socialist Appeal.

The Committee for Industrial Organization has evoked a great deal of comment and

enthusiasm in the ranks of socialist and progressive trade unionists. Obviously, if we hope to build a greater Socialist Movement and Party—a necessary prerequisite is the unionization of millions of workers in the basic industries. To this end the C.I.O. is of momentous importance.

Socialist trade-unionists should, however, retain a realistic perspective toward this development. The C.I.O. is now avowedly pushing the re-election of Roosevelt. Evidence at hand indicates that powerful and ruthless pressure is being applied to whip into the Roosevelt line those unions which have enjoyed a reputation for progressivism. The conventions of the auto and hosiery workers and developments within the I.L.G.W.U. and Amalgamated indicate that progressive trade-unionists are resisting the efforts of the C.I.O. leaders to dragoon the labor movement into the Roosevelt camp.

Socialists engaged in the vital task of organizing workers must make their position clear. Equivocation, diplomatic silence, or specious definitions of what constitutes trade-union practicality will not suffice.

The Democratic machine in which Roosevelt is an indispensable cog is essentially as reactionary as capitalism. Many thousands of trade-unionists want to hear our message, a clear, forthright pronouncement of socialism—of a program aimed at the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a workers' and farmers' commonwealth.

On to a greater campaign!

Murray Baron, New York
Manager, Suit Case, Bag and Portfolio Makers Union

All wings, all fractions of the radical movement accept as desirable and imperative the unification of workers who believe in a socialist society.

Differences develop as to the wisest way to achieve this end. The sins of the fathers should not be visited upon the children of the second and third generation; nor should past Third International sins be obstacles in new cooperative endeavors.

The Scottsboro Committee, Herndon, Tampa, United May Day demonstrations, the friendly relationship between the Southern Tenant Farmers Union and the Sharecroppers Union and the merging of the Unemployed Councils into the Workers Alliance prove that united action can be successful.

More opportunities must be created for joint action in the radical movement. The question of participation by socialists in the League Against War and Fascism should be carefully analyzed.

These pragmatic experiences in united action, both to the right and left, will be our best guides in determining the time and place for a powerful Farmer-Labor party, with a socialist ideology, which must be the ultimate United Front.

Mary W. Hillyer, New York
League for Industrial Democracy.

War and fascism are comrades in arms. They are made out of the same cloth—arrogance, oppression, violence—these three characteristics of one are characteristics of both. Fascism is egocentric—it sees everything through glasses colored with nationalistic pride and militaristic brutality. War feeds on these fruits of the fascist mind. Both are destroyers of all the finer and nobler virtues and accomplishments of humanity's climb toward decency. War and fascism rob man of his right to think, his heritage to freedom, and his sacredness of personality. Men become machines, minds are turned into mere automatic talking boxes expressing the ideas and the thoughts of a dictator or a military chieftain. The individual is turned into a robot owned body and soul by the state, a mere animal in chains. Man is no longer permitted to dream or to have visions apart from those placed before him by the state, in which rampant nationalism takes the place of human brotherhood. Religion is blinded and led captive when war or fascism get into the saddle. God becomes the puppet of the state. Socialism is humanity's saviour from all this.

S. Ralph Harlow, Massachusetts
Professor of Social Ethics, Smith College.

The Old Guard and the communists have succeeded in making the term "United Front" synonymous with joint action between socialists and communists alone. The term should therefore be abandoned in favor of a term such as "United Labor Front". This would designate its real meaning, for it is intended to mean that tactic by which groups and in-

dividuals, despite certain differences, combine on a common program to achieve one or more specific aims. It is of the essence of the tactic to unite the largest possible number of adherents, especially the organized workers, who do not accept the full socialist program. Because of their unsavory reputation, the inclusion of the C.P. in a given action may alienate much more important elements in the labor movement. While therefore we should seek to have communists included in "Labor Fronts" we must not do so at the expense of alienating important labor elements.

We should certainly not enter into united action, or agreements for united action with the C.P. *alone* (except in rare instances of emergency). To do so is to imply that no other groups have interests in common with us or that they are unwilling to cooperate with us. It is no more logical to have an agreement, general or specific, with the C.P. alone than with any other single group, such as the cooperative movement. In addition, united action with the C.P. alone would brand us with their undesirable reputation in the labor world. Of course, we should participate in united actions in which the C.P. is a constituent element.

Robert Delson, New York
Editorial Board, Socialist Call.

Democracy requires that all party members have the chance to voice their opinions and to vote in the establishing of party policies, principles, and rules. For these to form the matrix for party activity, as they should, once they have been formulated, every member must act in conformity with them whatever his individual opinion. That is discipline. Without them we would merely state judgments and utter pious wishes. With it we have the basis of united action for a common goal.

Only the party can be the judge of the matters to which discipline shall apply. It certainly applies to socialists in their trade-union relations. It could even apply to the acceptance of a personal dinner invitation—with a notorious labor-hater, or at a picketed hotel, for instance. The broadest interpretation must be put on the words "political action" which define the field in which discipline operates. Our safeguard against unwarranted interference in private affairs can only lie in the democratic process. At present we are too jealous of what we deem to be personal matters at the expense of our zeal for a socialist society.

There is a psychological difficulty inherent in the democratic method, which we must recognize and fight since we see no hope in any other method. When a bitterly fought question has been decided, the minority finds itself bound by what seems to it to be an unwise decision. It is difficult and distasteful to obey it with enthusiasm. Yet this is what must be done unless we accept the alternative of receiving our orders from above without criticism, deliberation or decision of our own, and that is not democracy. Shall the minority use its democratic rights to continue the debate even though a decision has been reached? Not after a referendum, if the matter was important enough to be carried that far. Only essentially new material or experience gained with the passage of time warrants additional party discussion.

Lewi Tonks, New York
State Chairman, S.P., U.S.A.

The workers today are in a reformist mood. There they will remain until they learn through further frustration the futility of attempts to make palatable a decadent capitalism. Proposed "labor" parties, either through mild, liberal reforms or through economically unsound programs, might gather for a time under one banner diverse and ambiguous elements. Experience has shown that radicals may participate in such organizations only at the expense of actively agitating for their cherished principles. In revolutionary crises these unwieldy bodies hinder rather than facilitate the transference of power to the proletariat. Socialists, to effect socialism, must build a party that will be an instrument for the overthrow of capitalism. This party must be composed only of workers who have an appreciation of their historic mission, who are prepared to seize power—whether ruthlessly or not—at the revolutionary moment, and who are capable of retaining power by the substitution of a workers' democracy for a bourgeois state. There is no other way. A watered-down program of reform will lay the ground-work for a fascist demagogue.

Paul S. McCormick, Secretary
Socialist Party State of Colorado.